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CRITIQUE

ON THE

FIRST PERFORMANCE

OF

YOUNG ROSCIUS,

AT

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE,

ON SATURDAY, DEC. 1,

As it appeared in the

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ALLEN A BROWN
DEC. 17, 1909

CRITIQUE

ON THE

FIRST PERFORMANCE

OF

YOUNG ROSCIUS.

DOCTOR BROWN'S Tragedy of *Barbaroſſa* was revived at this Theatre on Saturday the 1ſt of December, for the purpoſe of introducing Maſter BETTY, or, as he is called, the *Infant Roſcius*, to a London audience.

The characters were thus caſt:

Achmet (Selim in diſguiſe)	Maſter BETTY.
Barbaroſſa - -	Mr. HARGRAVE.
Othman - -	Mr. MURRAY.
Sadi - - -	Mr. CRESWELL.
Aladin - -	Mr. CORRY.
Zaphira - -	Mrs. LITCHFIELD.
Irene - - -	Mrs. H. SIDDONS.

This piece is liable to many critical objections, and has been ſuffered for ſome time to fall into diſuſe. It was, however, judiciouſly ſelected for the preſent extraordinary occaſion. In this Play, the character of *Achmet* is almoſt every thing. His mother, *Zaphira*, and his miſtreſs, *Irene*, divide but a ſmall part of the intereſt; and the declamatory rage of the tyrant *Barbaroſſa* is incapable of producing any ſtrong effect upon the audience. The character of *Achmet*, on the contrary, abounds with a variety of intereſting ſituations, and partakes only in a ſmall degree, of the general imperfections of the piece. Among theſe, two paſſages particularly deſerve notice.

In his firſt ſcene *Achmet* approaches *Barbaroſſa* as a ſlave, and tells a tale of deliberate falſehood with an air of innocence: and in the fourth act again, this generous Prince is made to play a double part; and, with

all the boldneſs of innocence, to proteſt his candour and ſincerity, while falſehood flows from his lips. The end may, no doubt, be pleaded in juſtification of the means in theſe departures from the line of moral rectitude; but the plea, however fair, is a diminution of the intereſt. There is no ſtring in the human breaſt that vibrates to hypocriſy. The audience may tolerate virtue reduced to ſuch a ſituation, but cannot be pleaſed with it. They ought not to expect in a youthful hero, full of generous fire, and unhackneyed in the courtier's wiles, ſuch an inſtance of Punic faith. Morality requires a ſtraight forward courſe, and allows no tampering with virtue. But theſe are mere ſpecks. The great body and all the features of the character are full of truth, grace, and beauty. Filial affection, generoſity, love, courage, and a ſtrong ſenſe of juſtice, are all predominant in the character of *Achmet*. They are alſo ſuch paſſions as become a youth of twenty,

the real age of *Achmet*; and, without any violence to Nature, may be felt and live in the breaſt of a youth of fourteen, the age of Maſter BETTY, who, on Saturday night, filled this important character.

In the variety of firſt-rate characters, in which this theatrical luminary, although juſt emerging from the horizon, has ſhone with meridian ſplendour, are *Hamlet* and *Richard the Third*. His perſonification of either, would, indeed, have greatly encreaſed the extraordinaries of this extraordinary *debut*. In theſe we ſhould have had to contemplate the workings of paſſions at an age when the actor could not be ſuppoſed, in the courſe of nature, to have felt their influence; the repreſentation of a child ſtriving to bend a man's bow; but the paſſions developed in *Achmet* are all becoming in a youth, and ſuch only as a youth might feel in their extreme. *Achmet*, beſides, does not make his appear-

ance until towards the end of the ſecond act, in which he has nothing but level ſpeaking to encounter. The fifth act is nearly of the ſame quality. It is, therefore, only in the third and fourth acts he is called upon for any extraordinary exertions—and theſe two acts may be ſaid, in reſpect of him, to conſtitute the whole piece.

From theſe premiſes, it follows, that the Managers have acted with a ſound diſcretion, in ſelecting this Play for the firſt appearance of Maſter Betty, and with a due regard for his perſonal intereſts, his character, his health, and his fame. Conſidering his extreme youth, the fatigues which he has recently undergone, and the anxieties attendant upon a *debut* before a London audience, they were bound to ſacrifice almoſt every thing to his ease and convenience. They could not have choſen a prominent character, condenſed into ſo ſhort a ſpace of time, or more ſuited to his years, than *Achmet*. There

is no part in the round of his characters, and ſcope of his peculiar powers, which could have excited leſs public curioſity. It is a youth filling a youth's part. Upon this ground, the Managers may alſo be entitled to the praiſe of liberality, but it does not neceſſarily follow. The leaſt intereſting character which he could perform muſt have produced a full Houſe, and the intereſts of the Theatre could not be advanced by any greater attraction.

The loud fame which preceded Maſter Betty's arrival in London, produced a degree of curioſity unknown in the annals of the Theatrical world. So great was the anxiety to behold this youthful Performer, ſeveral perſons ſought to conceal themſelves in the Houſe on Friday night, in the hope of remaining there unperceived until the returning night ſhould gratify their wiſhes by the appearance of *Achmet*.

So early as twelve o'clock on Saturday

the approaches to the various parts of the Theatre were beſieged with people clamorous for admiſſion, and between one and two they became crowded. The Managers, anticipating this reſult, had taken every precaution againſt its conſequences. A great number of Bow-ſtreet officers and conſtables were called in to preſerve the public peace, and prevent riot and confuſion. A large party of ſoldiers were alſo ſtationed at the ſeveral doors, to protect the people againſt the neceſſary and fatal reſult of the indiſcriminate ruſh of ſuch an immenſe tide. About half paſt four o'clock the crowd became ſo great, the moſt ſerious apprehenſions were entertained for the lives of ſeveral perſons, who were fainting away under the preſſure, and to whom, in the midſt of the impenetrable maſs, no aſſiſtance could be afforded from the outſide; it was therefore thought adviſable to open the Bow-ſtreet door, though a full hour earlier than uſual, with a view to accom-

modate the beſiegers, and relieve them from the preſſure which they had ſo long endured. In an inſtant, the tide ruſhed in, and took poſſeſſion of the ſpace between the exterior door and the bar in the lobby, where the entrance money is received. As only one can paſs at a time, and ſome delay is neceſſary, for the receipt and examination of the money and tickets, the ſlowneſs of the movement of thoſe in the van but ill accorded with the impatience of thoſe in the rear. The preſſure in that part of the lobby became infinitely greater, and its effects more alarming than they had previouſly experienced in the open ſtreet. They broke all the windows on each ſide of the entrance, for the benefit of the air; yet the heat and preſſure ſtill continued ſo great, as every moment to threaten ſuffocation.

A board was now diſplayed, announcing that the boxes were all full. This commu-

nication, however, though correſponding with the fact, did not operate to diminiſh the preſſure, and they continued ruſhing in with impetuoſity until after ſix o'clock. One half at leaſt of all thoſe who ſuffered this fatigue and danger, were obliged to return ungratified.

Nearly the ſame confuſion that prevailed without, was obſervable within the Houſe in the early part of the night; nor did it much abate even upon the riſing of the curtain.

The following introductory addreſs was written by Mr. TAYLOR; but the noiſe and clamour was ſo great, that it was impoſſible to aſcertain, in a remote part of the Houſe, how or to what extent Mr. CHARLES KEMBLE was able to deliver it:

Impatient for renown, all hope and fear,
How many a Candidate has ventur'd here!
Where dawning merit never miss'd its aim,
But reach'd, by due degrees, the heights of fame.

Yet now, unheeding Study's ſervile cares,
(So Rumour, with her hundred tongues, declares,)
A Youth your favour courts, whoſe early prime
Derides the tedious growth of ling'ring Time;
Mature at once, when Nature urg'd, he ſtrove,
Starting, like Pallas, from the brain of Jove.
But think not, though on Fortune's ſwelling tide,
Led by exulting Fame, in travels wide;
Think not he comes with vain triumphant ſail,
Nor dreads the dangers of an adverſe gale.
Though crowds on crowds have join'd in fond acclaim,
Through his bright track, to bear aloft his name;
And, to complete at length his bold career,
Have ſent his little bark in ſafety here:
Not pride, but gratitude, has warm'd his breaſt,
And hence alarms his modeſt doubts ſuggeſt,
Leſt that applauſe has been, with gen'rous rage,
Not laviſh'd on his genius, but his age.
He knows the temper of a Britiſh mind,
For merit zealous, but to error kind;
Nor can he deem his honours juſtly due,
"Until confirm'd, ſign'd, ratify'd by you."

The ſcene thus opened, but the tumult did not ſubſide. The audience could not let down their minds to the buſineſs, and were all impatient for a view of the only object which they thought worth enjoying.

The Pit preſented a *nouvelle* appearance. There was ſcarcely a female in it; and the preſſure was ſo great, that in the courſe of the night ſeveral men were overcome with the heat, and lifted up into the boxes, whence they were carried out of the Houſe. In the centre of it, the company appeared in the early part of the night to ſit a little at eaſe; but this was repeatedly noticed by perſons in the boxes, who pointed it out to thoſe in the extremities, who preſſed forward until the whole became one uniform and ſolid maſs.

At the end of the ſecond act, expectation was raiſed to its higheſt pitch, and the *Infant Roſcius* preſented himſelf amidſt a thunder of applauſe. He received the animated expreſſions and greetings of the admiring audience with a prepoſſeſſing modeſty, and then proceeded to the buſineſs of the ſtage. He introduced himſelf to *Barbaroſſa*

with judgment, and ſhewed great diſcrimination in the ſame ſcene, where he founds *Othman*, and finding him loyal, and attached to his perſon, diſcovers himſelf in theſe words:—

"I do commend thy faith. And, ſince thou lov'ſt him,
I'll whiſper to thee, that, with honeſt guile,
I have deceiv'd this tyrant, Barbaroſſa—
Selim is yet alive!"

Nothing could be more beautiful than the manner in which he conceived and executed this paſſage.

His miſtruſt and anxiety in the beginning of his converſation with *Othman*, and the joy brightening upon his countenance when he finds him true, until it breaks into a blaze as he pronounces

"*Selim is yet alive*!"

were wonderfully fine.

This ſingle line evinced his powers, and put him in complete poſſeſſion of his au-

dience. It received the moſt enthuſiaſtic applauſe. The ſucceeding paſſage, where he ſays,

——" Tell me, *Othman*,
And yet I tremble to approach the theme——
How fares my mother? does she still retain
Her native greatness?"

diſplayed the moſt exquiſite feeling. Filial affection could not be more happily conceived or expreſſed. The tranſition from tenderneſs to rage was alſo finely marked; and when *Othman* interrogates him as to his intent, he anſwered—

" To take juſt vengeance for a father's blood,
A mother's ſuff'rings, and a people's groans!"

with great energy and ſpirit. This paſſage was alſo rewarded by loud plaudits. The concluding ſpeech in the ſame ſcene, beginning with,

" Oh! thou haſt rous'd a thought, on which
Remounts with redoubled fire,"

was a beautiful piece of declamation, and

given with peculiar truth and chaſteneſs. This whole ſcene poſſeſſes great beauty and variety; but it requires little more than taſte, delicacy, and diſcrimination, to give its full effect. The third act demands more extenſive and commanding powers; and here we found this wonderful Boy riſing with the occaſion, and happily unfolding all the intereſt of the ſcene. Every paſſage was deſerving of the warmeſt praiſe; but if there was any one peculiarly ſtriking, it is—

"This very night the Tyrant threatens violence:
I'll watch his ſteps: I'll haunt him thro' the palace:
And, ſhou'd he meditate a deed ſo vile,
I'll hover o'er him like an *unſeen peſtilence*,
And blaſt him in his guilt!"

The ſpirit and animation with which he delivered theſe lines electrified the Houſe. All remembrance of the Boy was loſt in contemplation of the Actor. He ſeemed to poſſeſs all the power of executing the menace. Two loud, prolonged, and diſtinct peals of applauſe, declared the enthuſiaſtic admiration

of the audience. The effect produced by his delivery of the following paſſage,

> " Worthleſs were he to rule who dares not claim
> *Pre-eminence in danger!*"

was nearly equal.

This act, like the former, concludes with a fine ſpeech by *Achmet*. Maſter BETTY delivered it in a ſtyle that proved him perfect in points in which he is ſuppoſed to be defective. From the breaking of his voice, as is natural at his time of life, it may be preſumed to be deficient in ſweetneſs and variety of tone. We perceived no ſuch defect in this ſpeech. His voice was finely modulated and varied. In the lines,

> " Nor fears to ſtrike where Juſtice calls, nor dare
> To ſtrike where ſhe forbids!"

he was peculiarly happy. He ſeemed inſpired with a holy devotion; and the pious reſignation in which he acknowledges the

rule of juſtice, though expreſſed in the loweſt tone, was diſtinctly heard in the remoteſt part of the Houſe. The fourth act was equal to the expectation excited by his former ſcenes. In the paſſage where he reveals himſelf to *Barbaroſſa,* he enraptured the audience with a blaze of Majeſty. He appeared a Sun, emerging from a cloud, from whoſe ſplendid preſence, the Tyrant, like ſome guilty wretch, ſought to withdraw, and hide himſelf in darkneſs. The ſubſequent ſcene with his mother, in the ſame act, alſo abounded with ſpecimens of fine acting, of genuine pathos, and the moſt exquiſite taſte and feeling. To the fifth act, alſo, he gave all the intereſt of which it is capable. His ſelf-reproach for ſtooping to ſupplicate *Barbaroſſa,* and the ſpirit with which, when releaſed from his bonds, and receiving a ſword, he exclaims

> " Now, *Barbaroſſa,* let my arm meet thine!
> 'Tis all I aſk of Heav'n!"

proved alike his taſte and diſcrimination, and the force and energy of his powers. This ſcene concluded the piece, and the curtain dropped amidſt the loudeſt plaudits that ever ſhook the walls of a Theatre.

The appearance of this aſtoniſhing Youth is prepoſſeſſing in a very great degree. He is about fourteen years of age, and well grown. His features are handſome, and the ſhape of his face is oval. He is of a fair complexion, with fair hair, and a fine blue eye. There is nothing ſtriking in his face when he is unmoved; but when he is rouſed and fired with paſſion, it is wonderfully expreſſive. His eye is then, as *Irene* deſcribes it,

"Bright as the morning ſtar!"

and every feature is lighted up with the holy frenzy of one inſpired. Female beauty cannot afford any thing more ſweet than his ſmile. It was irreſiſtible in the ſcenes where

he proved the loyalty of *Othman* and the virtue of *Zaphira*.—To this he adds all the winning gracefulneſs of eaſe. Every action is juſt, appropriate, and correct. He treads the ſtage with dignity and firmneſs, and has an air of majeſty, in which all idea of his youth and ſize is loſt or forgotten. He delineates all the various and contending paſſions with the niceſt diſcrimination, never mixing or confounding them, but marking even the fineſt ſhades with all the ſtrength of contraſted colours.

Of the buſineſs of the ſtage he is a perfect maſter. The ſcene fills all his mind. He ſeems not conſcious of a preſent audience, yet there is no appearance of labour or ſtudy. Every thing flows, as it were, ſpontaneous, and he ſeizes the feelings of the audience, and carries them away without any apparent exertion. That a Boy of fourteen ſhould preſent himſelf under any circum-

ſtances or advantages of birth and education, in ſuch a ſtate of perfection, is indeed a wonder, a prodigy! certainly it conſtitutes an æra in the theatrical annals of this country.

We have heard much of the length of time, and the infinite labour and ſtudy required by ſuperior talents, to arrive at excellence in the art; and, what is remarkable in this youth, taſte, judgment, diſcrimination, and all thoſe qualities in which he moſt excels, are thoſe which time, ſtudy, and experience, are conſidered in a peculiar degree neceſſary to beſtow. Yet we are aſſured, that he is not in any extraordinary degree indebted to precept and education; that he is an inſpired genius, a being of a ſuperior claſs, and peculiarly gifted by Nature; that he is among actors what SHAKSPEARE was among dramatic writers. To this latter opinion we adhere. He is indeed

a favourite child of Nature, conceived in her happieſt mood. At his time of life, ſchooling could have done but little for him; Nature claims him entirely as her own. This opinion is not only grounded upon facts, but it is alſo more conformable with reaſon and the nature of man.

The final purpoſe of Tragedy is to move; and to move, is to ſtrike thoſe ſtrings of the heart which are moſt natural—terror and pity. The gentleman and the ruſtic have both ſenſibility and tenderneſs of heart, perhaps in greater or leſs degree; but as they are men alike, the heart is moved by the ſame touches. The ſpectators of a tragedy are, therefore, almoſt all on a level; and, to merit and obtain general approbation, the actor has little elſe to do but reflect upon his own thoughts, and draw from his heart thoſe ſentiments which will certainly make their way to the hearts of others, if

he found them in his own. Did *Young Roſcius* evince that he felt thoſe paſſions he expreſſed, and did he communicate his feelings to the audience? They will anſwer in the affirmative, and ſay with the French critic,

> "Ce ne'ſt pas un *Portrait*, une image ſemblable:
> C'eſt un Fils, un Amant, un Roi *veritable*."

Before fifteen the paſſions are ſeldom born, as they ſeldom ſurvive ſixty. A youth, therefore, who ſhows that the parts he performs are not merely words in his mouth, but ſentiments from his mind, is more extraordinary, than the old man of four-ſcore, who exhibits the energy of middle age; becauſe art, experience, and cuſtom, muſt have much ſhare in the latter, whilſt Nature alone inſpires and ſupports the former.

It is ſaid that the *Young Roſcius* copies no one, but is an original, and may ſerve for a model. The former is poſſible, but the lat-

ter is improbable; becauſe Nature may be ſo excellent as not to want the help of art; but he is too young, and has ſeen too little of the world, that art with him can be ſo refined, or confounded with Nature, as to produce perfection. Viewing him, therefore, as a heaven-born Actor, we muſt deprecate all invidious compariſons. It is no reflection upon the merits of Mr. KEMBLE, that labour has done for him what Nature has done for Maſter BETTY. Yet ſome injudicious friends of the former have not heſitated to ſay, that the latter is only a KEMBLE among boys, but a boy among KEMBLES. This is a pitiful parody of the well known character, given of the late Lord CHESTERFIELD, which ſays, "His Lordship was a wit among Lords, and a Lord among Wits." We hope, therefore, to hear no more of ſuch comments. Fair criticiſm has room enough without them, and Mr. KEMBLE's merit ſtands in need of no ſuch aſſiſtance.

Much of the doubts that have been raiſed reſpecting the extraordinary powers of this Youth, and of the curioſity to witneſs his performance, proceeds from the novelty of the ſituation. That a child ſhould make ſuch an attempt, even with a moderate degree of ſucceſs, is a circumſtance unprecedented in a London Theatre. The event which is here the general theme of admiration, would not excite any thing like the ſame ſenſation in Paris. There the *Theatre des Jeunes Elévés*, and the *Theatre des Jeunes Artiſts*, are open every night. The performers of both ſexes are all under the age of fifteen, and many of them allowed to be equal to the ableſt veterans of the other theatres. As ſoon as they arrive at fifteen they ceaſe to be members of theſe juvenile companies, and muſt ſeek engagements elſewhere; and from theſe nurſeries, tragedy, comedy, and the opera, in France, have drawn their brighteſt ornaments in a ſtate of

perfection. Maſter BETTY, to complete his engagement at Covent Garden, will play every night this week. He repeats *Achmet* this night*; and we underſtand that *Douglas*, *Hamlet*, and *Frederick* in *Lover's Vows*, are in the liſt of characters which are likely to follow.

The following biographical ſketch of this wonderful Youth, is copied from an excellent pamphlet, entitled " Memoirs of the Life of the *Young Roſcius*," by J. MERRITT:

" WILLIAM HENRY WEST BETTY, only ſon of WILLIAM HENRY BETTY, was born on the 13th of September, 1791, as appears from the pariſh regiſter of the Church of St. Chad's, in Shrewſbury. Mr. BETTY, the father, was the ſon of Dr. BETTY, a phyſician of the firſt eminence at Liſburn, not far from Belfaſt, in the North of Ireland, at whoſe

* Monday.

death he became poſſeſſed of a handſome independent fortune. His wife was Miss MARY STANTON, the daughter of a reſpectable gentleman in the county of Worceſter. She was a young lady of good education and high accompliſhments, and brought him a reſpectable fortune ; part of which, it is ſaid, is entailed on the young gentleman, who is the ſubject of this memoir.

" It has been frequently ſaid, that Miss STANTON had been formerly either a performer on a public ſtage, or in the frequent habit of acting in private theatres ; neither of which reports has the ſmalleſt foundation in truth. The name of STANTON happens to belong to ſeveral families of the theatrical profeſſion, in various parts of the kingdom ; and this circumſtance, from the mere identity of the names, may have led to a ſuppoſition that the family of Mr. BETTY was included in the number.

" It is, however, certain, that Miſs STANTON always diſcovered a great predilection for the amuſements of the Theatre; and ſhe and her ſiſters, in their own family, uſed frequently to divert themſelves with reciting plays, and other pieces of poetry.

" Mr. BETTY, at the time of the birth of his ſon, lived within a ſmall diſtance of Shrewſbury, whence he removed, a few years after, to the neighbourhood of his native place, in the North of Ireland. He occupied a farm, and alſo carried on ſome buſineſs relating to the linen manufactory, near Ballynahinch, in the county of Down. He remained in this ſituation till the riſing celebrity of his ſon rendered it neceſſary for him to give up his employments, in order to attend the young gentleman in his theatrical excurſions.

" Mrs. BETTY, being herſelf an accom-

pliſhed ſpeaker, and reſiding in a diſtrict where the Engliſh language is ſpoken in its worſt ſtate of depravity, thought it neceſſary to pay particular attention to the education of her ſon in that ornamental and neceſſary acquirement. He was, therefore, exerciſed at an early period, in the habit of reciting paſſages from the beſt of authors, and was taught to pronounce the language with propriety.

" In the ſummer of 1802, the play of *Pizarro* was brought out by the Belfaſt manager with much ſplendor, and Mrs. SIDDONS was the *Elvira*. As Mr. BETTY and his ſon happened to be in the town, they were induced to go to the Theatre, being the firſt time that Maſter BETTY had ever ſeen a play. From this moment his fate was decided. When he came home, he told his father with a look of ſuch enthuſiaſm, and a voice ſo pathetic, that thoſe who heard him will never

forget the expreſſion, *that he ſhould certainly die, if he muſt not be a player.*

"The wonderful acting of Mrs. SIDDONS, in *Elvira*, not eaſily to be forgotten by the moſt phlegmatic, had left an impreſſion on his glowing mind, which nothing could ever eraſe. It was fortunate for himſelf, that his firſt, and therefore moſt durable impreſſions, were ſtamped by ſuch a model. He talked of nothing but *Elvira*; he ſpouted the ſpeeches of *Elvira*; and his paſſion for the ſtage became every hour vehement and uncontroulable. He returned with his father to Ballynahinch, but not to his uſual occupations. The Siddonian accents ſtill rang in his ear; and her majeſtic march and awful brow ſtill filled his fancy. Every thing was neglected for his favourite object; and every thing not connected with it became tireſome and inſipid. His propenſity grew viſibly more rooted by time; his importunities were irreſiſtible;

and his parents at length, finding all oppoſition unavailing, were compelled to think ſeriouſly of the practicability of indulging him.

" In purſuance of the reſolution he had taken, Mr. BETTY returned with his ſon to Belfaſt, in order to conſult Mr. ATKINS, and to aſk his opinion of the boy's qualifications. Mr. ATKINS is the manager of the Belfaſt theatre, and a man of friendly diſpoſitions and liberal character. In his preſence, Maſter BETTY repeated ſome paſſages from the part of *Elvira*. The manager was a good deal ſtruck with what he had heard, but wiſhed to have the opinion of Mr. HOUGH, his prompter, for whoſe judgment he had a conſiderable deference. That gentleman was accordingly ſent for, and immediately diſcerned in the boy's recitation and action, great capabilities for a firſt-rate actor. He gave him a few inſtructions, and at the ſame time pointed out to him the part of *Rolla*, as

a much fitter object of his ſtudy, than that of *Elvira*, to which he had been directed by his feelings, on ſeeing the performance of Mrs. SIDDONS. The young gentleman felt the full value of the knowledge he had received, and in the ardour of his gratitude, told Mr. HOUGH he was his *guardian angel*.

" The father and ſon now returned once more to Ballynahinch; and Maſter BETTY happening to find the tragedy of *Zara* in the houſe, began to ſtudy the part of *Oſman*, in addition to that of *Rolla* and ſome others.

" Some time afterwards, Mr. HOUGH accepted a preſſing invitation which he had received from Mr. BETTY, to paſs a ſhort time at his houſe in the country, with a view of obſerving the boy more narrowly, and in order to give him more detailed inſtructions. Mr. HOUGH ſoon found that his pupil poſſeſſed a docility even greater than his genius;

for, whatever he was directed to do, he could inſtantly execute, and was ſure never to forget. He found that his feelings could take the impreſſion of every paſſion and ſentiment, and expreſs them in their appropriate language. Whatever was properly preſented to his mind, he could immediately lay hold of, and ſeemed to ſeize, by a ſort of intuitive ſagacity, the ſpirit of every ſentence, and the prominent beauties of every remarkable paſſage.

" The happy moment at length arrived, which was to realiſe our hero's hopes and wiſhes. Mr. ATKINS, induced by the reports he had received, and ſolicitous to bring forward ſome extraordinary novelty, on account of the extreme depreſſion of the times, offered him an engagement to play at Belfaſt for four nights. Accordingly, about the middle of Aug. 1803, he announced the Tragedy of *Zara*, the part of *Oſman* to be undertaken

by *a young gentleman only eleven years of age.* The ſingularity of the exhibition drew together a great crowd of people, who were equally aſtoniſhed and enraptured with the performance of the young actor."

THE END.

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